

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am going to miss DICK ARMEY when he leaves. I am going to miss my friend. Thank you, DICK, for carrying on the banner, for accomplishing so much, making life in America better for me and for my children. God bless you and God bless America.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because occasionally I still read articles or hear news reports about a teacher shortage in this Nation. This is a government-induced, contrived or special interest produced shortage, because this is a problem that could be solved very simply and very quickly if we would do a few simple things.

Many, many years ago, I taught American government and journalism at T.C. Williams High School in Alexandria, Virginia, the school that the famous movie "Remember the Titans" was made about. I have had many, many teachers in my family. My grandmother taught for 40 years. My older sister taught for 30 years. Nobody admires teachers, I suppose, more than I do. But I think some of the certification requirements are warped, are out of whack. It makes no sense, for instance, that people who have Ph.D.s or master's degrees and long experience and great success in a particular field cannot teach in most of the public schools of this Nation.

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What spurred me to speak here tonight was an article that was in yesterday's Washington Post entitled "Down to Basics on Teacher Certification." This article says:

"University of Virginia Professor Frederick M. Hess says states should dump their current teacher certification requirements and instead ask prospective educators three simple questions:

1. Do you have a college degree?
2. Can you pass a test in your subject area?
3. Can you pass a criminal background check?

If the answers are yes, yes and yes, you could apply for any teaching job in the state.

To those who are picturing a crime-free yet clueless misfit at the front of their child's class, Hess says: Give school principals some credit. Allowing someone to apply for a job is not the same as guaranteeing them employment, he wrote in a recent paper for the Progressive Policy Institute.

Currently, each state sets its own complex guidelines for certification. They require a degree from an education program. The problem is that nobody agrees on what these programs should be teaching, Hess writes, in "Tear Down This Wall," the case for a radical overhaul for teacher certification."

That is what we need, Mr. Speaker, a radical overhaul of teacher certification. It makes no sense, if, say, a Ph.D. chemist who works at Oak Ridge in East Tennessee and who has spent, say, 30 years in that field and decides he would like to teach for a few years, he cannot be hired over some 22-year-old recent college graduate who has a bachelor's degree in chemistry, because that young person took a few education courses, and this Ph.D.-experienced chemist did not.

It makes no sense, Mr. Speaker, that a person who has a Ph.D. in political science cannot go teach American government in most of the high schools, public high schools, in this country. Or you could name any other field.

Let us say that we know that many private small colleges are struggling financially. Some of them close. Some of them cannot pay as well as the public school systems in this country. So let us say a person who has a Ph.D. in English and has taught 25 years at some small college wants to go teach in a public school. They should be able to.

The school systems of this Nation, the school boards, should be allowed to say a degree in education is a plus and a factor in favor of someone being hired; but they should have the flexibility to hire somebody who has great experience in a field and has maybe even advanced degrees in a particular field, and they should not be disregarded or excluded from even being considered for teaching positions in this country just because they did not take an education course when they were in college.

So I appeal to the Committee on Education and the Workforce members here and at the various State levels across this Nation to give our school boards and school systems more freedom and flexibility in who they can hire. I believe that we will get much more qualified teachers and wipe out this contrived, government-induced, pressure group-produced teacher shortage in this Nation.

NATIONAL AVIATION CAPACITY EXPANSION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSBORNE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to introduce the National Aviation Capacity Expansion Act. This measure will codify into Federal law a historical agreement reached between Illinois Governor George Ryan and Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley that would benefit not only the Chicago area, but the entire Nation.

This agreement and legislation will modernize O'Hare International Airport by constructing new runways and reconfiguring old intersecting runways. It will also address automobile traffic congestion near O'Hare that will in-

clude western airport access, and it will maintain the quality of life for residents near O'Hare by committing \$450 million in funds for soundproofing. In addition, this agreement will construct a new south suburban airport near Peotone and continue the operations of Meigs Field on Chicago's lakefront.

Because O'Hare is the epicenter of the Nation's aviation community, this agreement is great news for airline passengers across the Nation. O'Hare is one of the world's largest airports and is the only dual-hub airport in the Nation, as both United and American Airlines base a significant amount of their employees, equipment and activities at O'Hare.

O'Hare serves more than 190,000 travelers per day, with 2,700 daily flights. Communities big and small are served by O'Hare. Forty-eight States in this union have direct access to O'Hare International Airport.

O'Hare is badly in need of an upgrade to meet the demands of the 21st century because the airport design was developed in the 1950s. By replacing old runways with a safe and more modern design, weather delays and cancellations will be greatly reduced, eliminating delays that often make the rest of the Nation shudder.

In addition, my bill ensures that O'Hare modernization will be paid for primarily through airline and airport generated-funds, such as the passenger facility charge, landing fees, concessions and bonds. Contrary to what the few opponents of this measure say, this bill does not put the Federal Government on the hook for the cost of this project.

This bill also moves ahead with a south suburban airport near Peotone, Illinois. While some of those few opponents argue that expanding and reconfiguring O'Hare will put a stop to the State of Illinois' plans to build an airport at Peotone, nothing could be further from the truth. As the Chicago Sun Times wrote yesterday in their lead editorial: "The road to an airport in Peotone runs through a revitalized O'Hare. The two are linked. Demand for air travel is a key ingredient of the economic vitality of Chicago, our region and the country. A crowded, overwhelmed O'Hare, delays air traffic nationwide, and costs uncalculated billions every year. Another 20 decades of a decaying O'Hare, and a lot of people won't want to fly into Peotone or anywhere else."

I applaud Governor Ryan and Mayor Daley for their courage, tenacity and resolve that made sure that this agreement was done. But for this agreement to become reality in the long run, we must codify it so that no future Governor may rescind the agreement, and that is what my legislation will do.

I urge all of my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation that will do more than any other measure in Congress to meet the aviation demands of the 21st century.